

SECURITY INFORMATION

DOCUMENT NO.

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. IJ

DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED BY TS 8 C

NEXT REVIEW DATE

DATE 10/1/92

1-2-80

REVIEWED: 378044

29 September 1953

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Summary analysis of recent USSR announcements in regard to agriculture.

1. From the beginning of the Bolshevik regime the procurement of farm products to feed urban workers was and still is a major problem of the government of the Soviet Union.

2. During the 10 years preceding World War II, collectivization accompanied by mechanization had not sufficiently developed to enable the government, through forced deliveries and purchase of farm "surpluses" of farm products, to provide the population of the Soviet Union with an average standard of living equivalent to the average enjoyed under the Tsar's regime preceding World War I. During the war the situation worsened. Up to 1949 the production of major foodstuffs had not regained the prewar level in spite of all government efforts.

3. The government attempted to bolster the supplies of meat, milk, butter and eggs by forcing collective farm households to sell their cattle, sheep, hogs, and chickens to the communal farm economy. This left 40 percent of the peasant households without livestock and with a bitter attitude toward collectivization and an apathy toward working on the communal fields of the collective farms. The production of potatoes and vegetables on communal fields also fell off sharply.

4. In 1949-50 the government took punitive measures and virtually rescinded the charter given to each collective farm in 1935 guaranteeing its boundaries inviolate and consolidated the 254,000 separate collective farms into 94,000 big farming enterprises each including two or more farm villages.

5. The government then started to concentrate the villages on each big farming enterprise into a single big settlement called an "agrogrod". This consolidation meant the loss to the collective farm households of their ancestral private garden plots that had been cultivated by their families for generations and which before World War II accounted for 20 percent of the total production of the USSR; a part of which the peasants sold on the open market. This step by the government created such unrest among the farmers, who were already bitter over the loss of their privately owned livestock, that the scheme had to be abandoned.

6. The government had 94,000 big farms which were poorly managed and inefficiently serviced by 2,950 Machine-Tractor Stations.

7. The Kremlin is now strengthening the government-owned Machine-Tractor Stations to become the decisive force in agricultural production and is putting the 94,000 big farms under their control reducing the peasants to a secondary role.

8. Until the government can develop the Machine-Tractor Stations to the point where they have become the decisive force in production, the labor force

of the collective farm households is required, and concessions must be made to interest the farmers to work harder.

9. The government has reduced the norm for required deliveries for both collective farms and collective farm households and increased the prices paid for both required deliveries and surpluses. It has temporarily reduced certain taxes, offers bonuses, and makes advance payments. It is increasing the availability of consumer goods to be exchanged for farm products. All this is to stimulate the collective farmers to produce bigger surpluses.

10. The collective farm worker will probably be stimulated. He responded to the stimulation applied to induce him to grow more cotton, sugar beets, tea, and citrus fruit. The degree to which he responds to stimulation, however, cannot be predicted at this time.

11. It is probable, however, that whatever increase in production, if any, that may take place during the next year or two, will be due more to the activities of the collective farm households than to any other cause or group.

12. As the Machine-Tractor Stations increase their role as the decisive force in agricultural production they will take over control of peasant markets and eliminate them as a source of cash income.

13. The private economy of the collective farm households will be weakened and the peasants themselves will become more and more dependent upon the collectivized economy and will sooner or later receive their wages in cash. The collective farms themselves will become, in fact, big agricultural enterprises wholly managed by the State.

14. The agropole inhabited by a rural proletariat will become, eventually, a reality.

15. If this goal can be achieved, the Kremlin will be freed from the uncertainties attending the present existence of a rural capitalistic class which will leave the Soviet rulers free, more vigorously than ever, to prosecute their struggle with the non-Communist world.

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